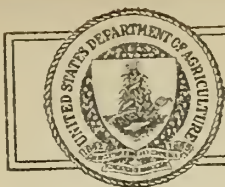


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U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
Office of Information  
Press Service



WASHINGTON, D. C.

RELEASE FOR PUBLICATION  
AUGUST 4, 1937 (WEDNESDAY)

THE MARKET BASKET

by

Bureau of Home Economics, U. S. Department of Agriculture

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PEPPERS RICH IN THE VITAMINS  
SLIGHTED IN AMERICAN DIETS

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Sunshine chases shadow in the stories coming out from the United States Department of Agriculture.

A somewhat gloomy report on what Americans, especially village Americans, are eating is followed by a cheerful story of big crops of the foods these same Americans should have to be healthy.

A large percentage of the American people are not getting enough vitamin A and C foods, reports the Bureau of Home Economics, after a careful study of data collected in 1936. And it is village families that are faring the worst. Families of wage earners in the large cities and those on farms are not so bad off.

Villagers in the North Central states present the sorriest picture of all, as far as vitamin A is concerned, for more than half of the diets are below this dietary standard. Those in the West were the least bad off, but even here almost a fifth were getting too little.

As for vitamin C deficiency in the diets of village families, the Pacific Coast region presented the least unfavorable picture (about a fifth of the families) and the Southeast, both whites and negroes, the worst--(around two-fifths and three-fourths respectively.)



Foods that are excellent sources of both these vitamins are peppers, spinach, parsley, red tomatoes, peas, collards, turnip greens, watercress. And most of these 2-in-1 foods are, of course, available in abundance at this time of year and for a low price.

One nice thing about eating vitamin A foods is that the human body can store any surplus of it, for future use. Like the camel with his hump.

But vitamin C, it appears, isn't stored in any such large amounts, so it's a pretty good idea for people to get their fair share of vitamin C every day.

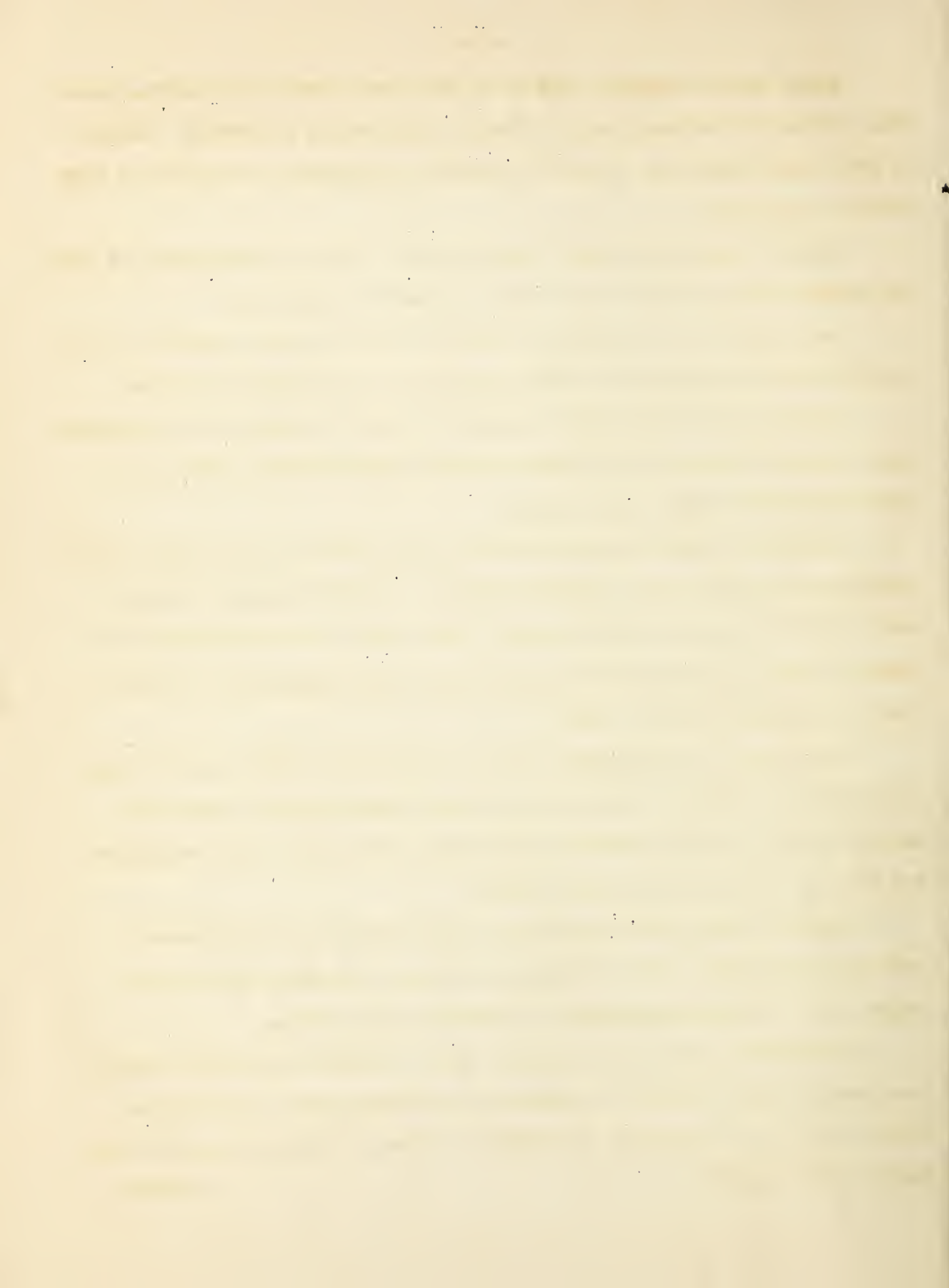
On the heels of this rather pessimistic report of American food consumption comes a cheerful story from the Bureau of Agricultural Economics about one of these vitamin-rich foods, green peppers.

Production of green peppers this year is not only above last year's but is also higher than that of the five-year average. In North Carolina, from which north central and eastern states are now getting much of their shipped-in supplies, the crop has been estimated at 35 percent above last year's, 50 percent above the average for 1928 to 1935.

As for ways of eating peppers, raw is the best for getting the full benefit of all the vitamins. Some people are fond of chopped peppers eaten with nothing but salt, but most Americans prefer them combined with other vegetables and with some sort of salad dressing added.

Carrots, peppers, and cabbage—all of them shredded or chopped—make a good salad combination. So do pineapple, peppers, and cabbage. And chopped peppers are an excellent ingredient for Russian salad dressing.

Raw stuffed peppers are delicious. Cream or cottage cheese with perhaps some chopped celery or sweet red peppers and seasonings make a good filling. Chilled they can then be sliced and served on lettuce or other greens, with some kind of salad dressing.





A delicious raw pepper relish combines a cup each of finely chopped green peppers, sweet red peppers, and vinegar, a small onion, chopped, 4 tablespoons of sugar and a half teaspoon of salt. Bring the vinegar to a boil, add the sugar and salt, and pour over the vegetables. Let stand several hours before serving. In a tightly covered jar in a cold place this pretty relish will keep for around two weeks.

There's some vitamin loss through cooking, of course, but even cooked peppers usually have a generous supply of vitamin A and some vitamin C. Stuffed peppers are favorites in most households. After the cleaned pepper has been par-boiled a few minutes, it is lifted from the boiling salted water and filled with whatever meats or vegetables--or mixture of the two--happen to be available. Bread crumbs provide the "binding" material. Macaroni and cheese makes another good filling, covered with buttered crumbs and heated in the oven until the crumbs are brown.

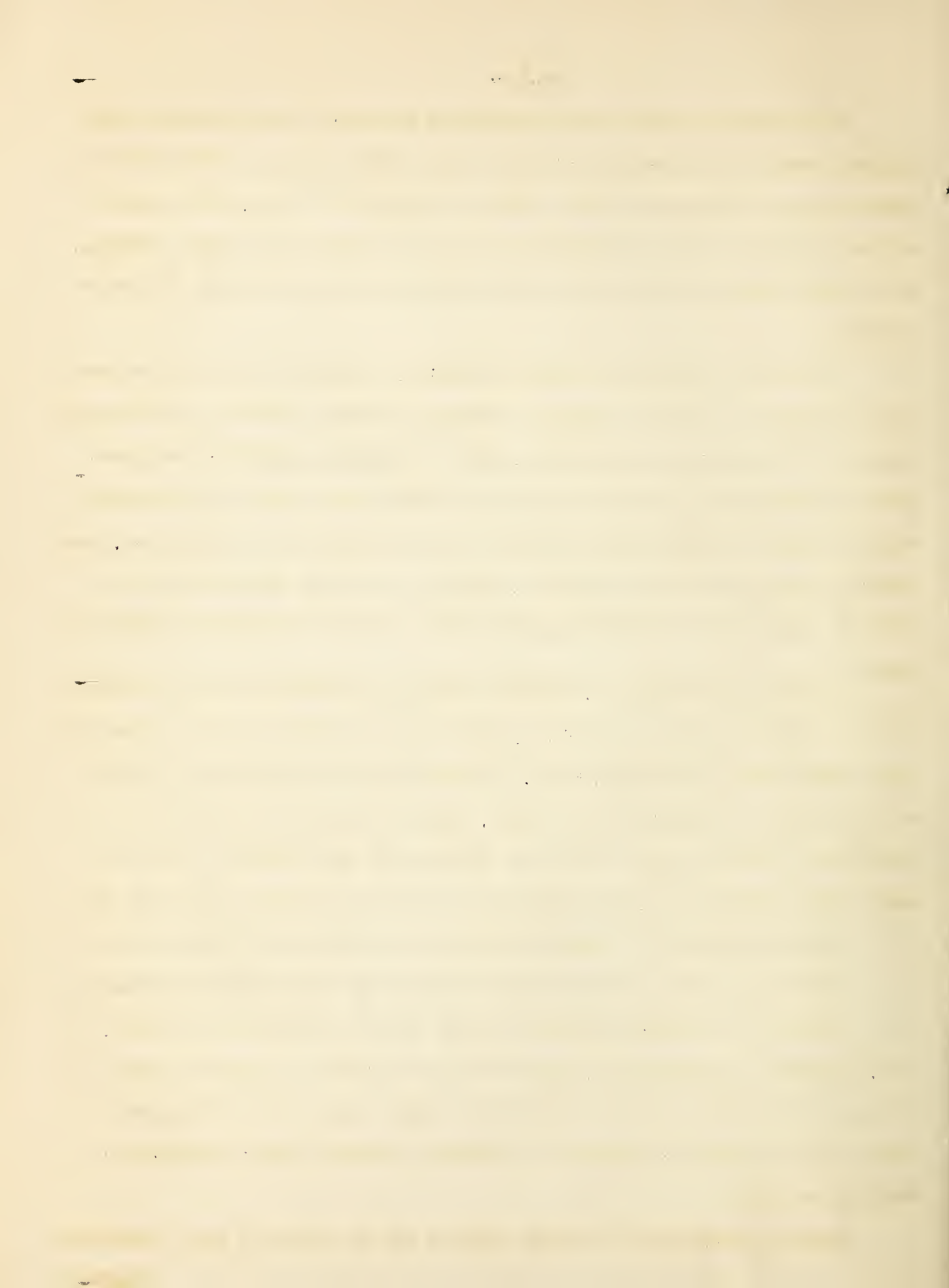
A pretty, nutritious, and delicious cooked pepper dish is made as follows. Get an oiled baking dish good and hot, then cover the bottom of it with parboiled pepper rings about a half inch thick. Then drop eggs onto the rings. The hot dish will make the eggs keep their shape. Season them, and if you wish put a tablespoon of cream on top of each egg. Then you may also sprinkle cheese and bread crumbs over the top. Put into the oven and leave until the eggs have set.

Creole sauce and the various chutneys are other ways of using peppers.

Drying and brining are good ways of taking care of any pepper surplus.

Brining is especially advocated by the Bureau of Chemistry and Soils, U.S. Department of Agriculture, which has done considerable research on this process, in connection with one of the state college experiment stations, and some years ago printed a bulletin on it, "Making Fermented Pickles"--Farmers' Bulletin No. 1438.

Another old-fashioned but still approved way of putting up large quantities





of peppers is stuffed with cabbage, and preserved with vinegar, either in big stone jars or in the 2-quart cans, with the latter on the preferred list.

This is the process being recommended by the Bureau of Home Economics. Remove the stems and seeds from 12 sweet peppers, either green or ripe. Soak them overnight in a brine made of 1 cup of salt to a gallon of water. Chop up separately 2 quarts of cabbage and 4 sweet peppers preferably red ones to give color to the dish, if the green ones have been used for the casing. Add a tablespoon of salt to each of the chopped vegetables and let stand overnight. Drain. Mix with the chopped vegetables 4 tablespoons of white mustard seed, 3 tablespoons of celery seed, 1 chopped hot pepper, and 1/2 cup sugar. Drain the 12 sweet peppers and stuff with this mixture, pack into fruit jars, cover them with hot vinegar, and seal.

The acetic acid of the vinegar acts as a preservative both of color and of the food itself. The stuffed peppers should be kept in a cool place until used.

People who eat generous amounts of peppers and other vegetables rich in vitamins A and C during these months of plenty will be helping to keep or make themselves physically fit. Those who continue eating generous quantities of such foods on until fall will be storing up a supply of vitamin A which may tide them over the months when they might not be getting quite the amounts they should.



# INFORMATION FOR THE PRESS

## United States Department of Agriculture

RELEASE FOR PUBLICATION  
AUGUST 11, 1937 (WEDNESDAY)

WASHINGTON, D.C.

### THE MARKET BASKET

by

Bureau of Home Economics, U. S. Department of Agriculture

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TOMATOES EXCELLENT  
SOURCE OF VITAMIN C;  
CROP PROSPECTS GOOD

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Tomatoes certainly have come into their own.

The vegetable that was once regarded as poisonous, today is a favorite on tables of rich and poor alike, and respected by scientists as a highly nutritious food.

It is one of the 20 vegetables for which the Bureau of Agricultural Economics collects production figures and for which it reports regularly upon growing and marketing conditions.

This year's prospects are for a total crop a little larger than last year, according to the Bureau's last report. From Utah and Colorado, Washington and Oregon, Michigan and Wisconsin, Arkansas and Missouri, New Jersey and Pennsylvania, Kentucky and Tennessee, and from New York come laconic wires saying "Conditions good." But from Ohio the significant report is "Excessive rains," and from Indiana and Virginia "Excellent in some sections, poor in others."

Nevertheless no one has the temerity to forecast what the price of these same tomatoes will be when they come to market.

Tomato prices are as erratic as the proverbial March winds, according to W. A. Sherman, of the Bureau of Agricultural Economics. And for good reason. Few other vegetables are so at the mercy of the elements. Comes a row of hot dry days, and tomatoes develop bad sun scalds, with an accompanying drop in



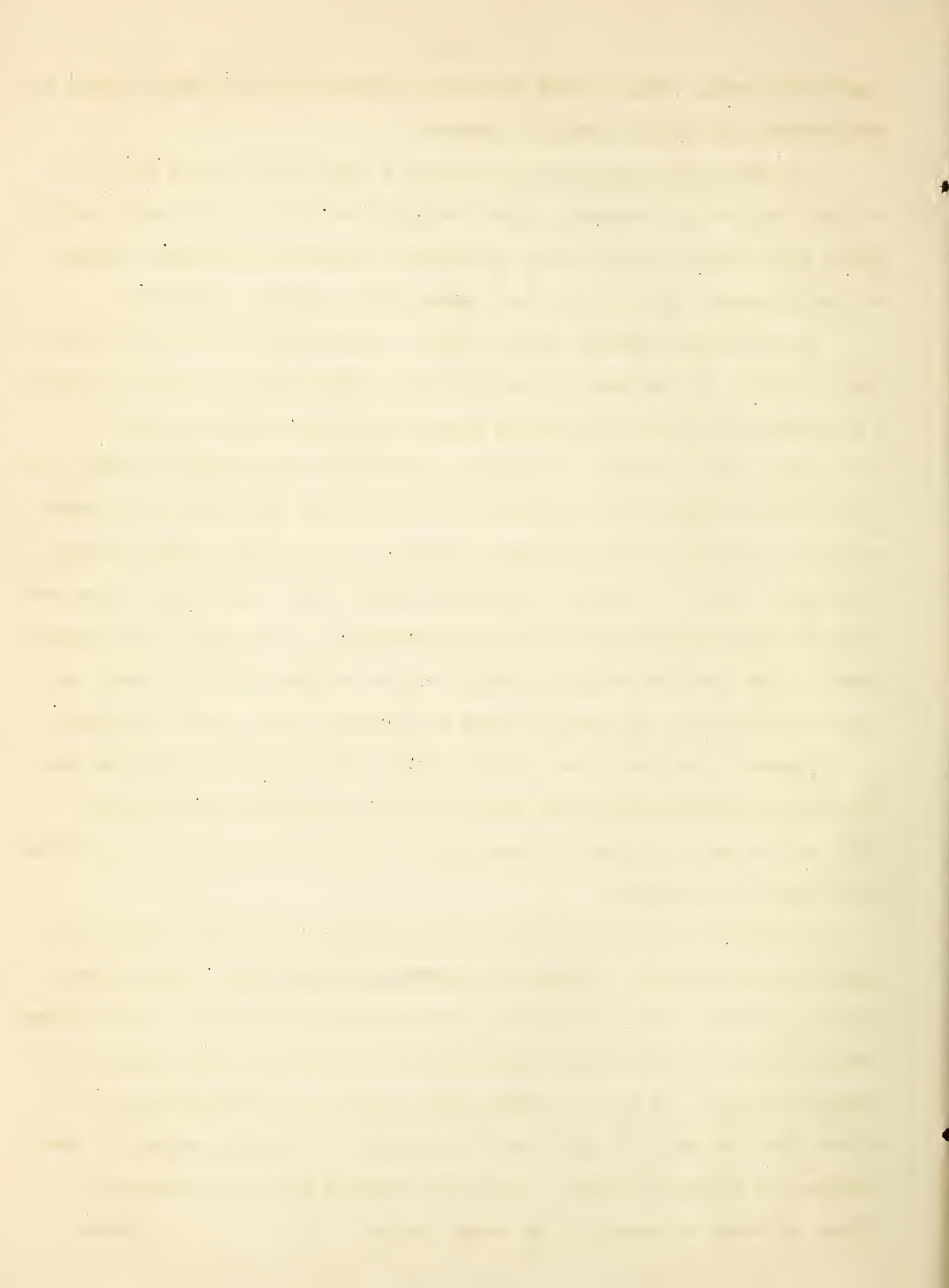
quality and price. Bring on some heavy rains and the result may be big cracks in the tomatoes, and prices plummeting downward.

One week tomatoes may be 50 to 75 cents a basket and the next \$2.50. Or the shift may be into reverse. A jump from \$1.50 to \$2.50 in a few days' time is not at all uncommon. And the jump in price may be entirely legitimate, because of the improvement in quality of the tomatoes, due to weather conditions.

Bargain hunting shoppers would do well to consider more than price in their tomato buying. For instance, one market may be advertising its tomatoes 25 cents a peck cheaper than another marketing center a block away. But the spread in price may be fully justified. There may be more waste in the cheaper basket, the finish on the tomatoes may be inferior, the flavor poor. Maybe they are cracked and have to be used at once to prevent spoilage. Of course, the poorer quality basket may be quite as usable as the more expensive one. It all depends upon what disposition the buyer wants to make of the tomatoes. Is she going to can them as tomato juice? Then the required trimming may not be great enough to cancel the price difference, and the cheaper basket may actually be the saving it appears.

Tomatoes march hand in hand with the citrus fruits through every diet plan worked out by nutritionists,--for families of every income level. These two foods are the good old vitamin C stand-bys--the bulwark of a good diet, as far as this vitamin is concerned.

But don't get the idea from this that tomatoes and the citrus fruits are equally valuable vitamin C sources, the nutritionist will warn. They are not ordinarily equal, weight for weight. Juice from red ripe tomatoes, on the average, has about half as much of this valuable nutrient as does most fresh orange or grapefruit juice. But even so, tomato juice may prove the cheaper drink, for prices often run less than half that of the citrus fruit juices, especially when tomatoes are in season locally. Then, too, tomatoes have a good supply of vitamin A, which is lacking in the citrus fruits.





Just supposing a person were depending almost entirely on tomatoes or tomato juice for his day's quota of vitamin C,--then how much should he get a day?

Nutritionists hesitate to answer that one specifically. Tomatoes make one of the most valuable of our sources of vitamin C, these scientists will say cautiously, but -

Tomatoes (as well as citrus fruits) differ in vitamin C value depending on variety, on whether they are cooked or raw and if cooked how, whether they have been held open to the air for some time after being sliced or after the can is opened. To be specific: some tomato varieties develop more than three times as much vitamin C as do others. And variations within a given variety are also great. Green tomatoes have almost as much of this nutrient as do ripe ones. And those picked green and ripened off the vine by the commercial ethylene treatment develop practically as much as do vine-ripened ones. Ripe tomatoes stored as long as 20 days lose practically no vitamin C so long as they are firm and free from decay.

In spite of all these variables, it can be said that a medium sized fresh tomato, if it has an average amount of vitamin C, should supply a person with his day's need of this vitamin. That's counting as medium a size of which it would take about 4 tomatoes to make a pound.

There's some vitamin C loss in canning tomatoes either whole or as juice, but not enough to worry about. Tomato juice made from ripe whole fruit contains practically as much vitamin C as the tomatoes from which it is made. AND home-made tomato juice is quite as valuable as the commercial product.

Once canned, tomatoes and tomato juice show no appreciable vitamin C loss during storage, even when storage is at room temperature for several months. And reheating upon opening doesn't much affect the nutritive value either.



Therefore when prices of the fresh fruit warrant it, canning tomatoes brings very satisfactory results. And dietetically it is advisable to put most of the tomato supply "straight" or in juice form, rather than as pickles or conserve. The latter foods are attractive and desirable accessories to a meal, but their nutritive returns, aside from calories, are negligible.

Raw tomato juice has a characteristic and interesting flavor, which commends it to some people. One should use only red ripe tomatoes and should chop them fine before putting them through a sieve. If a juice entirely free of pulp is desired, the tomatoes must be put through cheesecloth.

By this time next year some fairly accurate estimates of tomato consumption may be possible, for the tomato was one of the foods recently checked upon in a nationwide food purchasing survey made by the Bureau of Home Economics in cooperation with other agencies.

Already analysis has been made of data for one purchasing group, families of city workers. In this group it's families of the Pacific Coast workers who take the lead for purchase of tomatoes and tomato products. The range of figures for the different expenditure levels in each of the regions are: Pacific Coast states, 39 to 56 pounds per person per year; East South Central region, 23 to 45;

North Atlantic section, 19 to 38; East North Central states, 20 to 54; and Southern Negro, 9 to 40.

Economists and nutritionists of the Bureau of Home Economics are looking into the nation's market baskets, so to speak, to try to find out to what extent American diets are deficient. And the tomatoes in those market baskets have an important bearing on the subject.





# INFORMATION FOR THE PRESS

## United States Department of Agriculture

RELEASE FOR PUBLICATION  
AUGUST 18, 1937 (WEDNESDAY)

WASHINGTON, D.C.

### THE MARKET BASKET

by

Bureau of Home Economics, U. S. Department of Agriculture

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### COTTAGE CHEESE NOW AND IN GRANDMA'S DAY

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Cottage cheese isn't what it used to be! At least in most parts of the United States. What Grandmother made on the back of the kitchen range--what old-country folk called smearcase or schmier kase--is in a decline. The fine grained, mealy product with its distinctly acid flavor is less and less found in the marts of trade.

Yet that acid type of cheese is mighty good eating--that is, when it's good it is mighty good. Where it is still to be found, it is likely to be a temperamental product. Not only is there usually a wide variety of results from the same farmer's kitchen or the same milk distributing center, but also from one home or factory to the next. And because it starts its career with a high acid content, it will spoil more quickly than the other type cottage cheese.

Probably 80 percent of the cottage cheese of today is the mild flavored "popcorn" type,--that is, the big flake, low acid kind made with rennet. The size of the flake varies according to local demand. In some sections it's an inch flake; in others, a quarter inch. The larger the flake, the more whey is retained in the center, the less readily heat penetrates it--and the sooner it should be used, as it sours more quickly.

Sweet rather than sour milk is used for the rennet type cheese, so naturally it keeps longer than the old fashioned acid kind. Its acidity





increases gradually, but it can develop considerably and still be edible and nutritious.

Any type cottage cheese is a highly perishable product, however, and should be stored in the coolest possible place and eaten as soon as possible.

"The reason cottage cheese is not more popular in some communities is not hard to find," say specialists in the Bureau of Dairy Industry. "In too many places, dairies have not been putting out a uniform product. They've given cottage cheese the tag ends of their attention. One day they've given one man the job of making it and the next day another--whoever wasn't busy at the time. Naturally the product varied widely.

"Wherever dairies have stopped this haphazard way of making cottage cheese, have made it the responsibility of one well-trained man, and have put out a uniformly good product, cottage cheese is a well liked food.

"Another thing,--some milk distributing centers have deluded themselves into thinking they can put out a high quality cheese, from low grade milk. And it can not be done."

A high quality cottage cheese has a clean, mildly acid flavor, a smooth uniform texture, and a tender curd. If a cheese is tasteless, or over acid, or bitter, or has a hard or tough curd, it is either old or has been badly made.

The greatest cottage cheese eaters are those on the Pacific Coast and in the east north central states. That is, if one can judge from data collected by the U.S. Department of Agriculture. In the Bureau of Agricultural Economics cottage, pot, and bakers' cheeses are all lumped together; and these put the chief production states in order of their importance in 1935 thus: California, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Michigan, Wisconsin, Illinois, Indiana, Washington.

Data assembled by the Bureau of Home Economics in a food purchasing survey tell much the same story.



Figures have been totaled and fully analyzed for only one population group so far--for families of city workers spending between \$1.85 and \$2.50 a person a week for food. But here, too, Pacific Coast and east north central states show the most cottage cheese being eaten. In these two sections of the country, these city workers' families average about 2-1/2 pounds of cottage cheese a person a year. Moreover, almost a third of all the cheese they buy is cottage cheese. Families of city workers of North Atlantic cities get only half that amount, and those of the South average only about a fourth of what those of the North Atlantic cities buy. As more money is available for food, more cheese is bought, however, as is shown from study of the other expenditure levels. Cottage cheese is an excellent and inexpensive source of protein, and a good source of calcium and phosphorus, say the food composition specialists of the Bureau.

"And it is the calcium value of cottage cheese that is especially important," chime in the nutritionists. "The ordinary mixed diet of Americans is probably more deficient in calcium than in any other mineral."

Most nutrition specialists consider that the child needs an average of not less than a gram of calcium a day for the best rate of growth and for insuring good teeth. And a quart of milk has a little more than a gram of calcium in it,--1.2 to be exact. A bit more than half the calcium of milk is left in the whey when it is transformed into cottage cheese; but the almost-half left makes it still a good calcium food. A 2-ounce serving of cottage cheese, and perhaps that is the average serving, would furnish about five hundredths of a gram of calcium--.046 gram to be specific,--pretty far short of the day's total quota.

Cheese and milk are not the only good sources of calcium, of course; vegetables rich in this mineral are beet, dandelion, turnip, and mustard greens, and green cabbage and chard.



Cottage cheese certainly is a versatile food. It can be worked into delicious salads and salad dressings, into desserts, and even into cooked dishes. Because of its high protein value, it may be the basis of the main dish of the meal, and as such cut down on the food bill.

As the cottage cheese flavor is pretty mild, it needs some judicious seasoning. A bit of onion juice does a lot for it. Chives chopped fine make another good addition. Still other excellent seasonings are horseradish, chopped olives or parsley, celery or cucumbers, pimientos, green peppers.

Left-overs of bacon, ham, and other cold meats can be nicely combined with the cheese. So can peanut butter.

Cottage cheese may be substituted for cream cheese in recipes, if the cottage cheese is pressed through a fine sieve. For instance, in cheese cake.

Here is a cheese cake recipe suggested by the Bureau of Home Economics. Press through a fine sieve a half pound of cottage cheese. Mix thoroughly 2 cups fine rolled toasted bread crumbs, 2 tablespoons sugar, and a half quarter teaspoon salt. Reserve some of the mixture for the top, and pat down the rest in a smooth layer over the bottom and sides of a deep pie plate. Beat well the yolks of 2 eggs, add a half-cup sugar, a half-teaspoon salt, the sieved cheese, 1-1/2 tablespoons flour, and a half cup thick cream, beating them until smooth. Then add the beaten egg whites and a half teaspoon of vanilla, and pour into the pan lined with the bread crumb mixture. Sprinkle the rest over the top. Bake in a moderate oven (325 degrees F.) for about 45 minutes or until set.

If you can take the time to work out something artistic as well as delicious, you might try a cottage cheese loaf. Here's the technique. Cut a sandwich loaf lengthwise, so that you have about 4 long slices. Between two of the





slices use for filling cottage cheese mixed with chopped pimientos. For the next filling have onion juice and chopped nuts with the cheese. For the next use cottage cheese with ground ham. Then "ice" your four-decker loaf with cottage cheese, seasoned to taste. For both filling and icing the cheese has to be moistened with cream, of course. Slice and serve the loaf at the table, with a fruit salad.

Simpler ways of serving cottage cheese are: for stuffing celery, peppers, prunes, peaches, or pears,--in balls with pineapples,--and baked in a cottage cheese-nut loaf.

As it combines equally well with meats, fruits, and vegetables its possibilities are almost limitless.



# **INFORMATION FOR THE PRESS**

## **United States Department of Agriculture**

RELEASE FOR PUBLICATION  
AUGUST 25, 1937 (WEDNESDAY)

WASHINGTON, D. C.

### **THE MARKET BASKET**

by

Bureau of Home Economics, U. S. Department of Agriculture

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### **PEARS FOR EATING AND PRESERVING**

- - -

An enormous horn of plenty, spilling over with pink-cheeked golden fruit into the market baskets of a nation--so might an artist pictorially describe the 1937 pear crop of the United States.

Crop estimate artists of the Bureau of Agricultural Economics show the same picture just as vividly but more accurately with statistics. It's to be a record pear year they say--13 percent above that of 1936 and 1/4 larger than the 5-year average for the years 1928-1932. Moreover, the pears are proving to be of unusually good quality and size.

Most in evidence on fruit markets now is the Bartlett, blonde favorite of the pear family. For the past ten years Bartletts have been steadily gaining favor in the United States. It is probably safe to assume that they will continue to be popular and their production increase since many Bartlett orchards have not yet reached their bearing stage.

As early as mid-July the first Bartletts were picked in California and packed to be shipped over the United States. Closely following these come Oregon and Washington pears. By mid-September shipments will be under way from Michigan and New York--the two other important commercial pear growing states. Thus by



September all important commercial sources of these pears as well as local supplies will be ready for the purchaser. This is the time to buy quantities for canning and preserving.

The Bartlett, accepted the nation over as a perfect "eating" pear, probably gives more pleasure to the sense of taste with the least physical effort than any fruit known. It has neither to be peeled nor pared. The eater merely has to make sure that the fruit is reasonably clean, sink his teeth into the delicious soft pulp. His reflexes will do the rest.

Although the Bartlett, of the mid-season pears is most popular for eating, the Kieffers are also used in quantities for canning.

In the southeast where Bartlett pears are not grown so extensively because of their susceptibility to blight, many Kieffers are grown and used both for canning and for eating. While the Bartlett pear must be picked carefully at a certain stage of greenness, be properly boxed and stored for shipping and then closely inspected from time to time by producer and retailer, the Kieffer is usually shuffled about uncereemoniously with little care used in handling.

Kieffers are usually less expensive than Bartletts. When canned they hold their shape well. Late research has shown that Kieffers do react thankfully to more kindly treatment than they ordinarily receive. If they are picked green and allowed to ripen in a dark room at a temperature of from 60 to 65 degrees their flavor approaches that of the Bartlett.

The perfect pear depends upon the benevolence of Mother Nature and the intelligent cooperation of the pear grower. The Bartlett and many other pears to be shipped are always picked green. After the pear is ripe it breaks down so rapidly that it is often impossible to keep it more than a few days. The pear





grower harvests the pear at what he calls a "mature green" stage. From then until it is in the hands of the retailer the pear is kept at temperatures scientifically found to be the best for its preservation. Some of the pear crop goes to market immediately. Some is stored to be sold later in the season.

But this ripening isn't the problem of the shopper. It's her business to see that she gets the best possible pears for her money. If she isn't at all familiar with pears she should, if possible, buy those marked U. S. No. 1, or the more select pack, U. S. Fancy. Either of these grades usually insures the best value to the shipper--providing of course that the pears have been properly ripened.

If she buys from roadside markets or from loose supplies of the run-of-the-orchard fruit she should avoid pears that are shriveled, that have a water-soaked appearance or which show signs of worms or blight damage, or of having been picked from the ground.

Pears for immediate consumption should be soft but not mushy and deep straw yellow in color.

In buying quantities for canning or preserving the shopper should have several split lengthwise to make certain that no decay or brownish breakdown may be starting from the core of the pear which is not visible on the skin surface. The pears should have no scale nor worm damage nor show any skin splotches which may be the first signs of storage scald.

After the pear season is further along and members of the family have satisfied their yen for raw pears there are a number of interesting combinations to be worked out of pears with cheese, pears with other fruit, and pears as preserves on crackers with cream cheese.



Combine pears with acid fruits in fruit cups. Just like Cousin Tilly they are interesting in a mild way and may be trusted to get along well with their more tart relatives.

Pears have insufficient pectin for jellies, but pear preserves are a delicacy that few dieters have the heart to refuse. When Kieffer pears are used for preserves they should be held after they are picked until they reach the stage at which they are yellow but still firm. Wash them, pare, cut fruit into small uniform pieces. Core. To each pound prepared fruit add three quarters to one pound of sugar. Then the cook has two choices.

She may immediately combine the fruit and sugar and add one quarter cup water to the pound of fruit and cook. Or she may let stand overnight the alternate layers of pears and sugar, and cook them in their own juice next day. In either case, they must be carefully stirred until they reach a boiling point, then boiled rapidly with constant stirring until the sirup is somewhat thick and packed in sterilized jars.

Little Seckel pears, which will be available soon, have a high content of sugar. They are a good size for pickles, which may be served this winter as relishes with meats.

It is best to buy Bartletts that have been kept in storage no longer than 60 days. By the beginning of November the Bartlett season and the season for other mid-season pears is definitely over.

The fall or winter pear is a delicacy with which the average American is unfamiliar. In the past several years pear growers have formed organizations to develop new markets for them and to acquaint both dealers and consumers with the handling of the fruit.



Many of these pears have been shipped abroad and to metropolitan centers of the United States for sometime, but because of the close attention which must be given to their storage temperatures they have been too much trouble to bother about for the retail merchant in smaller towns.

Perhaps within a few years we will be as familiar with these varieties as we are with the famed Bartlett. All these fall or winter pears are picked when quite hard and green, but are allowed to ripen in storage. The varieties differ as to the temperatures at which they ripen best. A winter pear which has been harvested at the right time, properly stored and properly ripened, and eaten in the normal season of the variety to which it belongs is naturally mellow, juicy and aromatic.

Definite steps have been taken to carefully grade these pears in the western states in which they are grown. The home cook who would like to give her family something different this winter would do well to try one of the fall and winter varieties if it is available in her town.

Five of the more common of the winter pears and their seasons are: Bosc, September 1 - December 15. Comice, November 1 - early January. Nelis, December 1 to late May. Anjou, November 1 - April. Hardy, thru August, September, and October.

